

**Common Good Initiative
Overtown**

Allegany Franciscan Ministries

**Evaluation Report
December 2016**

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Introduction

In late 2011, the Allegany Franciscan Ministries Board of Trustees began a process to identify a new strategic opportunity that would allow the organization to more deeply fulfill its mission, be more open to new and innovative ways to create healthier communities, provide for the highest and best use of available funding, promote systemic change, and continue to energize our community, volunteers and staff. In December 2013, the board of trustees approved a new strategic initiative called the Common Good Initiative. In keeping with the mission to serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities, Allegany Franciscan Ministries has identified one community in each of the three regions and will work with its citizens and stakeholders to create opportunities, develop strategies, and make investments that lead to positive health outcomes in each community.

The initiative has multiple interrelated goals: to build collaboration, advocacy capacity, and resident leadership; to influence system changes and through those changes, long-term health and wellness indicators; and to ensure sustainability. Activities to achieve these goals include convening and engaging, investing, Councils for the Common Good, partnering, and others. Allegany Franciscan Ministries obtained community input to identify priorities, each council then identified strategies to address priorities. In Overtown, priorities and current draft strategies are as follows; please note the Council is still working on the strategies:

Figure 1: Community priorities and strategies

Priority: Community voices inform policies and decisions

- Outreach to local citizens
 - Work with organizations
 - Develop advocacy network
 - Multi-media campaign
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Priority: Accessible affordable high quality youth development opportunities

- Support for Overtown Children and Youth Coalition (OCYC)
 - Education opportunities for adults working with children and youth
 - Marketing and messaging
 - Affordable youth development opportunities
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Priority: High quality employment

- Training to obtain certificates and two-year degree programs; entrepreneur programs
 - Business development for profit and non-profit
 - Specialized human resource function
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Progress to Date

This section presents the progress toward the goals listed above.¹ This section first presents data on implementation and investments, then the goals. Data in this section come from multiple sources: monthly and board reports of initiative activities and investments made, investment results from partner reports, and interviews with staff and stakeholders.

How is the Common Good Initiative being implemented?

Figure 2 presents Common Good Initiative planning and council milestones. Interviewees cited funding the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition as significant accomplishment, as well as how the council is developing as a team, and completing a request for proposal (RFP) to implement the community voices priority. When investments related to that RFP are made, the council will have begun two of the three priorities. Next steps are to develop an implementation plan for the final strategy (employment) and to conduct a six-month follow-up of the OCYC investment.

Implementation, however, also encompasses Allegany Franciscan Ministries' approach to the work. The board provided clear direction that the Common Good Initiative should work with the community and help build capacity. The project has not kept to the original timeline due to the deliberate and intentional engagement with the community. See the initiative-wide report for data on this aspect of implementation.

Figure 2: Common Good Initiative milestones

Timeframe	Implementation milestones
June 2014	Determined the Common Good Initiative neighborhood.
June 2014 through December 2014	Gathered community input. Identified potential priorities. Began investments.
January 2015 through December 2015	Conducted a community vision session. Finalized priorities. Continued investments.
January 2016 through June 2016	Established the Common Good Council. Researched and determined possible strategies and potential partners. Continued investments – first major grant awarded.
July 2016 through December 2016	Continued to develop the council.

¹ For details on the methodology, please see *Evaluation Plan v4* dated October 2014.

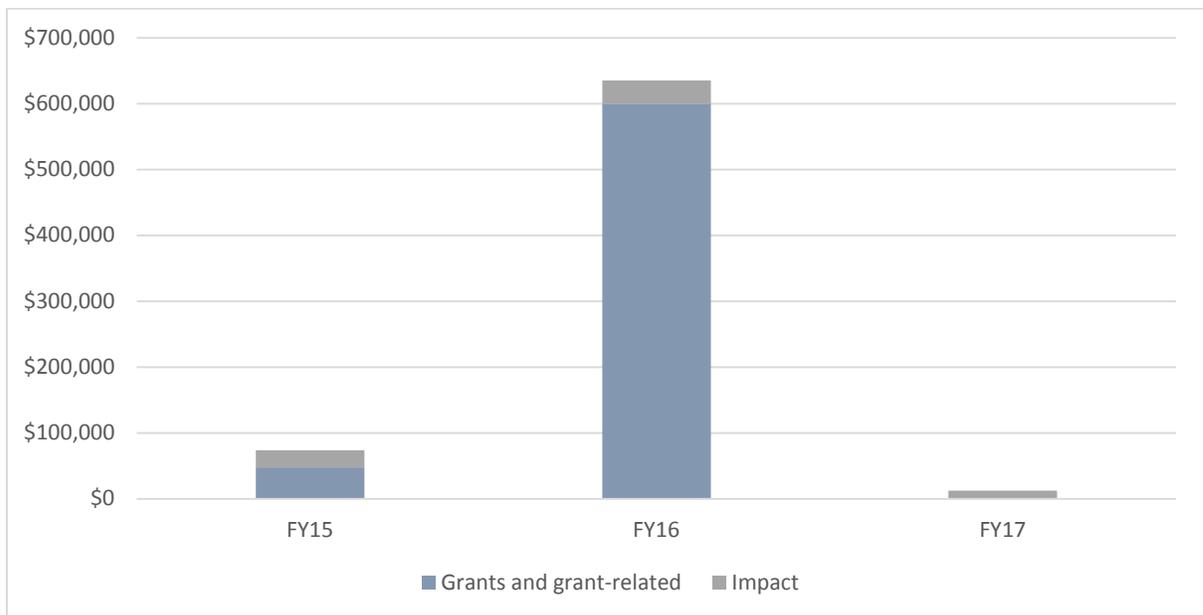
Timeframe	Implementation milestones
	Conducted research on proposed strategies. Continued investments. Developed an RFP for community voices priority.

What have been the investments to date?

To date, the Common Good Initiative has made two types of investments: impact funds and grants and grants-related investments. Impact funds are smaller grants that support goals, address community needs, and/or communicate Allegany Franciscan Ministries’ commitment to the community. Grants and grants-related investments address priorities and/or system change. To date, over \$721,000 has been invested: \$74,000 in impact funds and \$605,000 in grants and grants-related investments.

In fiscal year 2014-2015, two grants and grants-related investments were made. The first was to Suited for Success: \$5,000 to support the Overtown Children & Youth Coalition’s development of strategic goals and its master plan. The second was to Catholic Volunteers in Florida: \$42,500 to recruit volunteers to increase the capacity of organizations serving Overtown. In fiscal year 2015-2016, \$600,000 was provided to the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition as a capacity development grant to formalize the collaborative and implement its master plan to improve outcomes for children and youth in Overtown.

Figure 3: Impact funds and grants and grant-related investments, by fiscal year



What is the progress in promoting and supporting collaboration, advocacy, and leadership?

This section provides highlights from the last six months in three areas of interest: collaboration, advocacy, and leadership. Please note that this only reflects the period from July to December 2016; the next report will reflect the initiative to date. Data in this section are from monthly reports provided by the vice president of each region, board reports, investment reports, and interviews with stakeholders.

Collaboration

In the past six months the prior VP and the new VP met with stakeholders and promoted collaboration where possible. In addition, the council designed a request for proposal that established and defined clear collaborations around the advocacy communication and community-organizing goals for Overtown.

From an interviewee:

“There’s no core set of values that allow people to work together. People are still fighting for resources, or they’re just not partnering together at high level. So, relationships aren’t mutually beneficial.”

Except for the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition, most interviewees described low collaboration in Overtown. One interviewee noted, “The Youth Coalition is probably the only example of collaboration I see in the community.” And coalition members noted that one benefit was “just to connect more because of the meetings, being able to see what other folks are doing and to collaborate from that or share ideas.” Those that did report higher levels of collaboration cited established organizations, such as the university, or partners that are from out of the area: “Organizations that are a little more established can allow themselves a partnership, ‘cause

they have the funding coming in. There’s not a lot of incentive to share if you don’t have a lot of extra resources.”

Advocacy

In the past six months, the initiative has worked to develop advocacy through development of strategies for the community voices priority. As of December 31, the final RFP to begin this work was ready for the council for review and dissemination in the community. The RFP has four components:

- Develop and implement outreach efforts to engage, educate and gather feedback from the residents and citizens of Overtown.

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of local resources (programs, services, support systems based in Overtown and/or available to residents of Overtown); improve communication strategies between local organizations; assess the capacity needs of local organizations; and increase the capacity of local organizations where needed.
- Collaborate with existing groups (i.e., Overtown Advisory Board/ Overtown Community Oversight Board), as well as with other local stakeholders and groups to develop a united voice for advocacy points, policy review and systemic reform goals pertaining to the Overtown community.
- Develop and implement innovative, multi-faceted and targeted communication strategies to effectively disseminate the work and outcomes of the Overtown Common Good Initiative, while also highlighting and celebrating the community's assets.

Interviewees reported low advocacy with the exception of a few homeowners associations. Interviewees noted a lack of collaborative advocacy and barriers to participating. One interviewee noted, "Organizing around particular issues and putting forth a policy agenda is a piece that is not happening specifically around this community. There are a lot of voices chiming in to what needs to be done, but I don't see a true organized effort around a particular issue or set of issues that would influence elected officials or a policy in a big way. So there's a level of sophistication and capacity that can be furthered." Another noted, "Advocacy is low, for a multitude of reasons. Some of it's education. Some of it, it's just hard getting people to collaborate and agree. Truth be told, sometimes it's some people want to shine and they're not willing to be a follower when it's time to be a follower and be a leader when it's time to be a leader." Another said, "I think that they have the ability to do so [advocate], but the resources are limited."

Leadership

In the past six months, the Common Good Initiative has supported leadership through the Common Good Advisory Council and through funding efforts to build leaders – for example, sending council members to the Homeboy Industries Conference in Los Angeles. Interviewees noted the presence of mature leaders who are vocal, but a lack of young leaders or people who can "make things happen." As one person noted, "In terms of leadership that goes to government activities and advocating, I think it's slim. I think there's a small, very vocal group. They're the ones that have been here for years and years and years and have continued to put forth their voice. I don't know how well they represent the neighborhood. A lot of them have moved out of the neighborhood but still maintain a strong tie. They're all 50s, 60s, 70s. So I haven't seen a strong younger generation kind of come up, so to speak."

What system changes have occurred (i.e., is the fence gone)?

System changes have been described by staff and council members as long term, multi-faceted, not a Band-Aid, leveraged, fiscally sound, preventative, root cause, partner driven/collective, diverse, policy-focused, inclusive, barrier-breakers, generational, and disruptive. Another way to think about system changes is to consider the adage “Give people a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach people to fish and they will be fed for a lifetime.” But as Allegany board member Sister Margaret Mary asks, “What do you do if there is a fence around the pond?”

In the past six months, the Council for the Common Good identified desired system changes (listed below). For example, the council hopes that the strategies of outreach and education for residents and building an advocacy network will lead to increased resident engagement and increased advocacy capacity. Please note that the Overtown Council has finalized system changes for the community voices priority, but is still working on the others.

Figure 4: Priorities and system changes

Priority: Community voices inform policies and decisions

- Increased capacity of structures for community influence
 - Increased resident engagement as documented through civic participation or advocacy activities.
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Priority: Accessible affordable high quality youth development opportunities

- Increased capacity of organizations serving youth (e.g., quantity and quality of services, stability)
 - Changed social norms around Overtown’s image
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Priority: High quality employment

- Increased resources and partners to support business development
 - Others to be determined as the committee completes this work
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Future reports will report on how the strategies listed on page 3 influenced system changes and the results. For example, multiple investments have been made to support youth development: investments in OCYC, capacity building for a youth sports event, a grant to encourage higher education, and a youth economic development conference.

Is there positive movement in health and wellness indicators?

As noted, the community set priorities, and each council developed strategies to address those priorities. Those strategies should result in the system changes listed above and the system change should result in the changed health and wellness indicators listed below. Please note that the council has not discussed these indicators and they are in draft form. The next step will be to define these indicators and establish baseline data.

Figure 5: Priorities and health and wellness indicators

Priority: Community voices inform policies and decisions

- Increased collective efficacy
 - Violence and crime (cross-strategy indicator)
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Priority: Accessible affordable high quality youth development opportunities

- Youth development indicators (education, employment, risk behaviors)
 - Youth health, including behavioral health
 - Violence (cross-strategy indicator)
-

Priority: High quality employment

- Employment
 - Income
 - Education
-

How will efforts be sustained?

Baseline sustainability will be assessed after strategies have begun. Sustainability indicators may include diverse funding streams, system changes, ongoing support of behavior changes, dissemination of relevant products (NORC, 2010), leadership, capacity, and a sustainability plan.

Conclusions

There are several items of note in this six-month report:

- Strategies for priorities were finalized and the desired system changes and long-term health and wellness indicators were identified.
- The Common Good Initiative has invested over \$721,000 in Overtown to date.
- There has been progress on two priorities: one significant investment and the completion of the RFP.

Please see the initiative-wide report for lessons learned.

References

- Davidson, J. (2005). *Evaluation methodology basics: The nuts and bolts of sound evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- NORC. (2010). *Developing a conceptual framework to assess the sustainability of community coalitions post-federal funding*. Bethesda, MD: NORC.
- Thomas, D. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation, 27*, 237-247.
- Weiss, C. (1998). *Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
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Appendix A: Data Sources

Interviewees

Interviewees included eight stakeholders. While most interviewees were repeated from the first set of interviews, some substitutions have been made. The design is not longitudinal but cross-sectional, so any substitutions must represent the same community sector. The vice president also participated in a formal interview.

Documents & other

- Monthly reports from the vice president.
 - Documents forwarded from the vice president (e.g., meeting summaries).
 - Information obtained through email updates and staff meetings.
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